
Arts Education & School Improvement Resources for Local & State Leaders

Prepared by
Terry Peterson and Sarah Howes
Office of the Secretary
U.S. Department of Education



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*“Remember, all the people we honor today were once
in an ordinary community in an ordinary neighborhood
living only with the imagination they had that brought them
to this day and this honor. We have to find that imagination
and fire it in the children all over America.”*

President Bill Clinton
National Medal of Arts Ceremony

*“...Art in all its distinct forms defines, in many ways, those qualities
that are at the heart of education reform in the 1990’s — creativity,
perseverance, a sense of standards, and, above all,
a striving for excellence.”*

Richard W. Riley
U.S. Secretary of Education

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INTRODUCTION

This guide was developed in response to the tremendous interest in strengthening schools, communities and the economy through the arts that was voiced through the National Endowment for the Art's *American Canvas*. It is intended to help local and state leaders and arts education practitioners learn about opportunities in U.S. Department of Education programs for securing funding for improving arts education and using the arts to improve overall student performance. The information in this guide will help arts educators and parents in their discussions with local or state education decision makers identify possible financial support for improving schools through better arts education programs.

Most funding granted through the U.S. Department of Education is in the form of *formula* grants to state departments of education and local school districts and *financial aid* to college students. Formulas for elementary and secondary education are usually based on a combination of the number of total school-age population and the number of school-age population living in poverty. Formulas are, therefore, the means for dividing the appropriation from Congress among the states. State departments of education administer federal grants under guidelines that call for the state to distribute the funds of some programs by formula to local school districts and funds of other programs by a competitive process. Therefore, almost every school district in the nation has some amount of federal funds from various programs which are described in this guide. Most formula grants are awarded to states without special application, but a few are awarded to states only if the state applies and meets established criteria. A number of small grants can be applied for by school districts often in partnership with other local organizations.

The following program profiles include:

- A brief description of the program and its intended uses
- Specific program contact information
- The type of grant and who may apply
- The name of the legislation which authorizes the program
- Most recent appropriation level
- Date appropriated funds are available from the Department
- Examples (in boxes) of program funds used for arts education (when known) or arts funds which meet purpose of program.

If you have examples of how Department funds are used to support quality arts education and how the arts have strengthened your school(s) please share them with Sarah Howes, Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C., 20202-0110. She can be reached on-line at sarah_howes@ed.gov. Her telephone number is (202) 401-0769; her fax number is (202) 401-0954. General information about the Department and its programs and initiatives can be obtained by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN, or on the Internet at <http://www.ed.gov>. This publication is available at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ArtsEd>.
